

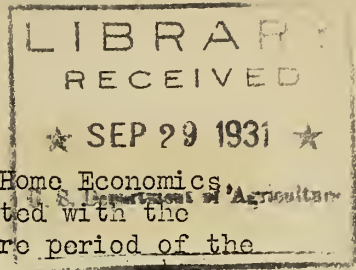
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ROMPERS



A radio talk by Miss Clarice L. Scott, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 43 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, in Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, September 17, 1931.

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Did you ever see so many styles as Dame Fashion creates nowadays? She suggests that we wear certain designs for street, others for sports, and still others for afternoon and evening. It would seem that every person and every occasion had been considered -- but one.

What about styles for babies of the creeping age? Surely their clothing needs are quite as important as those of grown-ups. I should say they were even more important. Tiny muscles must be free to develop properly. It takes no small amount of exercise to learn how to travel about on one's hands and knees, then to pull upright and take those first uncertain steps. Infant dresses and petticoats hamper these new activities as do dresses and suits like those worn by older children who have learned to walk. What creeping babies need is clothing designed especially for their own ways of doing things.

At the Bureau of Home Economics, we believe that rompers are best for babies between six and eighteen months. This type of garment can be comfortably fitted to the shoulders, made roomy through the body and then held in again at the knees. But rompers do have to be very carefully designed if they are to be both comfortable and practical. It took a great deal of experimenting at the Bureau to work out rompers which are easy to put on, easy to wash, and which give the creeper absolute freedom of activity.

Now the experimenting is finished. We have several entirely new romper designs to suggest.

Possibly you will be interested in hearing about one which we like especially well. We call it the Envelope Romper because the closing resembles that of an envelope. The closing slants from the center front to the inside of the left leg opening. A triangular extension of the back pulls up between the legs and laps over the front. There it fastens with three buttons. This arrangement is exactly opposite the one commonly used but it makes dressing far more convenient. You can lay a baby on the opened garment and literally button him up in it, without even lifting or rolling him over.

You should see youngsters wearing this new romper in action. The garment doesn't hamper a single movement of the baby. For instance, inverted pleats are set in at each side of the back and front, then stitched down just far enough to set the garment to the shoulders. Whenever the baby creeps or makes long reaches for toys, these pleats spread open and supply more room.

Another nice feature which means added comfort to the baby, also longer wear from the romper, is at the lower back. Two and one-half inch pleats are laid in at the side seams exactly in line with the band of the hips

(over)

These pleats give about two inches of additional length to the back so that no matter whether a baby creeps on his hands and knees or merely sits in his doubled-up way to play, the suit is perfectly comfortable.

We even worked out a new shaped leg opening. It is curved high at the front and slightly squared at the inside as this cut fits well and keeps the front from slipping down over the knees. The neckline, too, is a bit out of the ordinary for rompers. It is low at the front and collarless. In fact, the whole design is extremely simple with no unnecessary style details that will muss readily or complicate laundering. The nice thing about it is you don't even miss these details. Babies are so satisfactory in themselves that they need no adornment. There, again, we meet that unfailing guide to correct dress for children --simplicity.

Of course, suitable material and colors are always important. And for this Envelope Romper it is best to choose soft but durable qualities of broadcloth or gingham, and those delicate hues so becoming to young babies. These materials are not only well suited to the tailored design of the romper, but they are comfortable to a baby's tender skin, and their smooth, unnapped surface does not readily collect soil. They are also easy to launder, and certainly that is a point wisely considered when choosing clothes for creeping babies and toddlers.

No time now to tell you about all the other new romper designs we at the Bureau have devised. But then, we hope you will want our new leaflet. It will be off the press next month. It not only describes all the designs but pictures them on real babies. Simply write to your Farm and Home Hour Station or to the Bureau of Home Economics, in Washington, and ask for U.S. Department of Agriculture Leaflet No. 79 entitled "Rompers." As soon as it is published you'll get it. But don't be impatient. Meanwhile, we'll send you -- if you ask for it -- a list of the commercial patterns now being made for some of these new designs.